

From: Richard Townsend
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/16/02 10:55am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Dear Sirs:

I would like to comment on the settlement regarding Microsoft and the state attorneys general. My interest in this case is strictly as a consumer of software products.

I feel very strongly that it is in the best interest of the consumer for the antitrust litigation to be concluded promptly without being allowed to continue as the attorneys general are advocating. That would just raise costs of software without any real benefit to the consumer. There is no question that Microsoft has stepped over the line, but they will be penalized for that. The motives of the attorneys general appear simply to be to enhance their political visibility, to aid Microsoft's competitors, and to enrich trial lawyers. Anyone who has purchased the latest versions of Microsoft's products has seen a dramatic rise in the prices. It doesn't take a genius to figure out that much of the money is going into litigation costs. It seems like there is some truth in the famous comment by one lawyer to another that "It's not whether you win or lose, it's how long you can keep the meter ticking."

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